COCHIN
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE LEGISLATIVE SESSION, 1117

Monday, *the* $\frac{\textit{1st December 1941}}{\textit{16th Vrischigam 1117}}$

The Council met in the Council Hall, Ernakulam at Eleven of the Clock with the Hon'ble the President (A. F. W. DIXON Esq., I.C.S.), in the Chair.

Mr. T. V. Subramania Ayyar was absent.

SWEARING IN

The Hon'ble President and Mr. K. Achyuta Menon (Secretary to Government) were sworn in

OPENING SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT

Mr. President:

Hon'ble Members of the Cochin Legislative Council,

I have very great pleasure in extending to you all a warm welcome to this meeting of the Council. The agenda before us is lengthy, and I would crave the hon'ble members of all sections of the House to extend to me their support in the discharge of the onerous duties of the Chair, in order that the business before the House may be disposed of smoothly and efficiently, and to the best advantage of the State.

2. The State is recovering gradually from the effects of the cyclone. The prompt and comprehensive measures taken by the Government for immediate relief of sufferers to which reference was made in the Budget speech did much to mitigate the hardship caused. Every effort is being made to expedite the disbursement of loans, and enquiry into the question of the amount of land revenue remission to be granted is nearing completion.

3. Landless labourers in some parts of the State have suffered due to a variety of causes of which the cyclone is only one. Government propose to examine various possible methods of providing more employment in the State.

4. Hon'ble members would have noticed with satisfaction in the latest issue of the Gazette, a Proclamation temporarily staying

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suits and the execution of decrees for the eviction of *verumpattam* tenants from their holdings. The Proclamation is the logical outcome of deep and abiding interest which His Highness takes in the agricultural prosperity of the State in general and the welfare of the *verumpattam* tenants in particular. In obedience to His Highness' commands a Bill is being drafted, the governing principle of which will be the grant of fixity of tenure to the *verumpattam* tenant for so long as he continues to pay the stipulated rent due from him and remains faithful to his engagements. The Bill, I may assure you, will be introduced at the earliest possible opportunity. I am sure that hon'ble members will agree that the new status thus given to the *verumpattam* tenants will be productive of substantial advantage to them. The magic of property turns sand into gold, and it may well be hoped that the gift of permanency of tenure will result in these cultivators investing money in improvements to their holdings and in adopting improved agricultural methods, thus increasing their prosperity and thereby the prosperity of the State as a whole.

5. The question of providing better irrigation facilities for *kole* lands situated mainly in the Trichur Taluk has been engaging the attention of Government for some time. Much of this time was taken up by investigation into the possibility of using the water in the Chalakkudi river, as a supplemental source of supply. Due to various reasons, including the heavy expenditure involved, no definite decision could be arrived at by Government in regard to this proposal. The point came up in the last Makaram meeting of the Legislative Council, when it was suggested that an expert should be appointed to investigate the matter. Government have since made further enquiries into the matter, and in view of the necessity for an early solution of the problem, have decided to adopt the recommendation of the Irrigation Board that as an experimental measure the expedient of using some of these lands situated at the northern end of the area and inferior in productive capacity, approximately 1,200 acres in extent, as a reservoir for storage of water for the benefit of the remaining area should now be taken up, followed by the levy of a light cess on the lands to be benefited. It has been ascertained that the scheme commands itself to the great majority of owners of *kole* lands. Steps will be taken at the earliest opportunity to implement this decision.

6. I am pleased to be able to report to Hon'ble Members that I have recently been afforded an opportunity of visiting the sister State of Travancore and discussing with the Diwan several important questions of mutual interest.

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7. One of the most important questions discussed was that of the supply of electric power to Cochin State from the Pallivasal electric power station in Travancore. The terms of the agreement between the two States were finally settled, and only await the approval of the Crown Representative. Due to the extraordinary war conditions, it is very difficult at present to obtain the additional equipment required to supply the full needs of the two States or to predict with any accuracy when it will be available. It was therefore necessary in addition to make temporary arrangements to meet our immediate requirements, with the equipment actually available. It was arranged that the Travancore Government should supply within the next few months the additional power which will shortly be required for Ernakulam and the power required for the Chowwarra Water-works and for the booster pump stations to be erected.

8. The question of royalty to be paid for the additional supply of water to be obtained from the Alwaye river was also discussed, and it is expected that an agreement will be arrived at soon.

9. The question of relief from double income-tax was discussed and agreement was reached that both Governments should issue notifications embodying the same arrangements as are now in force between British India on the one hand and Travancore or Cochin on the other.

10. Exploratory discussions were held regarding the important questions of ensuing an adequate supply of Burma rice to meet the requirements of both States, of improving the organisations and control of water transport, and of improvements to the Shoranur-Ernakulam road. Several other questions of less importance were also discussed.

11. I am sure that hon'ble members will agree that every endeavour should be made to maintain the most friendly relations with the sister State of Travancore. The States are linked together inextricably and, united in friendly co-operation, there is much that can be done for the mutual benefit of both. I am pleased to be able to report that during my visit to Trivandrum I found this fact was fully realised, and that the Travancore Government are anxious to co-operate to the full. Let us take full advantage of this friendly spirit.

12. Important though these questions and those which you will consider during this session are, they pale into insignificance, when compared with the tremendous issues being contested, fortunately for us, at present, beyond the borders of this State and of India. On the result of this vast conflict depends the whole future of civilisation, of the decencies of life, of human freedom and of

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most of what we hold dear. As the British Prime Minister has said in his own inimitable way at a time when all looked dark :

"If we can stand firm all Europe may be free and the life of the world may move forward into broad sunlit uplands. But if we fail then the whole world including the United States, including all that we have known and cared for, will sink into the abyss of a new Dark Age made more sinister, and perhaps more protracted by the lights of perverted science".

Thus, in helping to win the war, we are supporting a world cause. This is no war for any one country, or dynasty or Empire ; it is not even Britain's war, as some who wish to damp enthusiasm in this country would wish us believe. It is a war of all right-minded people throughout the world against the hideous new order of the Axis, which threatens to enslave all peoples, except the *Herrenvolk*, the German race, under the yoke of tyranny, imposed by means of the firing squad, the torture chamber and the concentration camp.

13. Less than 18 months ago my predecessor had found it necessary to utter a warning against that fatal complacency, which supposes that India is immune from attack. With the German advance against the Caucasus, and their penetration into Syria and Iran, no one can still imagine that Germany has not the intention, if opportunity afforded, of invading this country. To the East of India the question of peace or war hangs in the balance. Here we meet in a peaceful atmosphere, but on our outward western defences in the Libyan desert, a vast battle is raging, in which Indian troops are playing a valiant part, in order to ensure that the evil Nazi hordes shall not defile the fair land of Ind.

14. Eighteen months ago the prospects in this war against the forces of evil were gloomy now the front against Hitler has been greatly strengthened and the contestants are evenly matched. Time is still on our side, and provided, and this is important, every section of the community in every country and State which is opposing Hitlerism determine to do their utmost to help in the struggle, victory cannot be very long delayed. Hence it is that at this critical stage of the great war, it is so important that Cochin State should play its full part in helping the allied cause. It may be thought that Cochin with its limited resources can do nothing of value to affect the course of the struggle. But it has to be remembered that the allies depend upon the support of a number of small units to give help and strength where it is needed whether by way of men, money or supplies, to the larger units which are bearing the brunt of the struggle. As examples, New Zealand with a population but little larger than that of this State, has provided a force which is earning undying fame on the Libyan battle fields, and Malta, with a

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far smaller area and population is proving itself indeed a thorn in the side of our enemies. This State too can make a noteworthy contribution.

15. Much has been done already. In addition to the contribution of Rs. 10,000 a month from the State to the Viceroy's War Purposes Fund, over a lakh of rupees has been collected for the War Fund and the State is providing supplies for the Defence Services notably in timber, but much more can be done. In making a further effort we have the full support of His Highness the Maharaja who has already shown so clearly how desirous he is, that his people should do all that is possible to support the great cause. It is also fortunate that all the parties represented here are willing and eager loyally to follow His Highness' lead.

16. In order to organise the War effort in the State a War Publicity Officer has recently been appointed. His first duty will be to organise publicity and disseminate sound propaganda throughout the State. A kind of gallop poll recently taken in a part of Chingleput District showed the extraordinary ignorance about the War which exists in rural areas in South India. It will be his business to dispel that ignorance by distributing pamphlets and news sheets, by organising rural reading circles in every village and by arranging for speakers and for propaganda vans. In the towns also meetings will be arranged and publicity material will be distributed. There are many good orators among hon'ble members and I would appeal to them to join in the campaign and plead for one of the finest and greatest of causes, which has ever been presented to mankind.

17. A part of this campaign will be designed to attract recruits for the services and for technical training, which besides providing the best form of help for the allied cause, will alleviate unemployment. A third object will be collection of funds by way of gifts or investment. This has been placed third, not because it is unimportant, but because spreading the truth about the war and the cause we are fighting for, should precede a request for financial support, the success of the latter appeal depending upon the success of the former. We want people to give or lend because they believe it is right and necessary. In this great work hon'ble members can play a leading part, and their help will be of the utmost value. I appeal to them, therefore, to assist the War Publicity Officer in his work to the greatest extent possible. Efforts will also be made to ensure, so far as possible, that Cochin obtains its full share of orders from the Supply Department.

18. Let us unite then in this supreme crisis of human history and determine to support those brave sons of India who are defending

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the approaches to this country by land, by sea and in the air, and say with Britain's Prime Minister.—

"They know that they have behind them a people who will not flinch or weary of the struggle, hard and protracted though it will be; but that we shall rather draw the heart of suffering itself the means of inspiration and survival, and of a victory won not only for ourselves but for all; a victory won not only for our own times but for the long and better days that are to come".

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

R. V. C. A. HOSPITAL—HEAD CLERK—APPOINTMENT OF

1. Mr. K. R. Viswambharan *(Ezhuvas-Talappalli):* Will Government be pleased to state.—

(*a*) the name, qualifications and period of service of the present incumbent of the post of the Head clerk of the Rama Varma Central Ayurvedic Hospital, Trichur;

(*b*) the post, he was holding previous to his appointment to the present post and the pay he was drawing then;

(*c*) the names of graduate clerks now serving in the department of Ayurveda with their qualifications, grade of pay, date of first recruitment to Government service and period of service;

(*d*) whether applications were called for before filling in the vacancy of the post of Head clerk;

(*e*) whether Government have received applications from clerks or officers serving in other departments for the post of the Head clerk of the R. V. C. A. Hospital;

(*f*) if answer to (*e*) is in the affirmative, the names, qualification, grade of pay, and period of service of those applicants;

(*g*) how were the applications referred to in (*e*) disposed of;

(*h*) with whom is the power of appointment to the post referred to (*i*) vested as per Standing Orders; (*ii*) whether the Staff Selection Board was called upon to fill in the post referred to in (*a*);

(*i*) if answer to (*h*) is in the negative, why?

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